Two RHD roads

FROM PAGE 1

action," ACC Director General (admin) Col Hanif Iqbal said refusing to disclose the names of people responsible for the sake of ongoing investigation.

"The actual loss of money and misappropriation of money can be confirmed once the investigation is complete. This is a primary report, Hanifadded.

BONPARA-HATIRKUMRULROAD The road was constructed with the financial help of World Bank between December 1, 1998 and December 31, 2002. The road was constructed in four phases.

The investigation revealed that most irregularities and corruption took place during the second phase of construction--25km of road (from the fourth km to 29km) by one construction firm and 14km (from 29th km to 43rd km) by another firm.

The ACC said the 39km of road, in phase-2, was constructed using 4.77 percent asphalt concrete bitumen ignoring the specification of using 5.70 percent. The contractors in collaboration with R&H employees used one percent bitumen less.

The contractors also used local soil for road construction instead of using sand which is dredged up for this purpose. The contractors also submitted bills showing that they used the best quality soil, where soil is required for construction, even though they used the lowest quality. DHAKABYPASS

The bypass was constructed in Gazipur, Dhaka and Narayanganj between 1997 and 2006 to ease traffic congestion in the capital. The road was constructed so that vehicles heading to the northern part of the country from Chittagong, and vice versa, could bypass Dhaka via Narayanganj, Rupganj and Gazipur.

The road started developing potholes soon after it was constructed and at a stage became unus-

The investigation revealed that public procurement regulations were not followed in constructing the road. The probe also found that a total of 429 contractors were used only for completing the soil-related work and another 97 contractors paving the road.

construction specifications.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has approved issuance of notices on the spouses of eight Roads

time, has approved four proposed charge sheets against five people accused of misappropriating money and taking bribes and has given the

ACC Director General (Admin) Col Hanif Iqbal disclosed the commission's decision at a press briefing

The spouses of the R&H officials who would be asked to report their wealth are Saleha Banu, wife of additional chief engineer | there. Shahabuddin, GS Raihan, wife of former additional chief engineer Adam Ali Gazi, Rahena Rahman and Samaituha Mariam, wives of superintendent engineers Arifur Rahman Zinnah and MA Moktadir Belal, Hosne Ara Haque, Afzala Hossain and Razia Sultana, wives of executive engineers Sanaul Haque, Khandaker Golam Mostafa and Georgis Hossain, and Selina Haque, wife of deputy assistant engineer Nurul Haque.

The ACC has approved charge sheets against Shaban Ali, auditor at upazila accounts office in Natore's Gurudashpur upazila, Hamidul Haque Tokder, food inspector at upazila food controller's office in Jaldhaka upazila of Nilphamari, and Mojibor Rahman, upazila project implementation officer in Baliadangi upazila of Thakurgaon. They were accused of taking Tk 1,500, Tk 1050, and Tk 5,000 in bribe.

former family planning officer in Bogra Khadiza Khanam, would be charged with misappropriating Tk 3,79,500 and destroying evidence of

tion of seven bundles of CIS sheets.

The contractors also used substandard materials and violated

Contempt of court

bench of Justice ABM Khairul Haque public servants accused of violating and Justice Md Abu Tariq issued the the law are excused from appearing suo moto (on its own motion) rule on before courts and allowed to present the government, asking it to explain

ernment.

FROM PAGE 1

January 22 last year.

unconstitutional.

Bhuiyan and Shahdeen Malik.

appeared for the petitioners while

Attorney General Salauddin Ahmed

and Deputy Attorney General

Mozammel Huq stood for the gov-

Unlike the previous grand elec-

toral alliance, the new alliance will

not allow any fundamentalist parties

to be a part of it and the allied parties

will make efforts to bring other pro-

liberation forces such as Communist

Party of Bangladesh under one

critics even within the AL-led 14-

party alliance. A few parties in the

alliance are presently at odds with

Rashed Khan Menon, president

"The issue of including Ershad in

was not discussed with us and it

wasn't discussed this time either," he

said adding that the issues within the

14-party have to be resolved through

discussions for a stronger alliance

that would stand firm against the

Hasina upon completion of her

The parties however will continue

In the meantime, the AL acting

president categorically threatened to

resist the local body polls under the

state of emergency before holding

to be named said, "If the party does

give rise to massive internal disputes

Another AL leader said most

central leadership to control."

A senior AL leader requesting not

the national elections.

anti-liberation war forces.

returned to USA yesterday.

This initiative, however, has its

umbrella, the sources added.

"This is against article 27 of the constitution that says all citizens are equal before law. The court will determine whether a person accused will have to appear before it," it

their statements through lawyers.

FROM PAGE 1

added. The ordinance allows the press to report and comment on "normal" court proceedings and functions, or anyone to seek disciplinary proceedings against a judge as long as they are done in "good faith" and through

"restrained language" It also provides for a judge's personal conduct to be reported. It says a judgment too can be criticised as longasitis "constructive".

Referring to those provisions, the court said criticising judgments or orders of the courts with appeals against those pending at higher courts is very risky. Even if the criticisms are justified, those are against justice. Justice seekers cannot get justice from judges fearful of criticisms. Criticisms never facilitate dispensation of justice.

It added that honour of the judges should be preserved even after their retirement. "Their dignity stands for the dignity of the entire judiciary. So disrespect to them is disrespect to the judiciary."

SC lawyers Shamsul Huq and Tajul Islam filed the writ petition as a public interest litigation on June 8.

The same day an HC bench comeach other over the nomination of prising Justice Syed Mahmud Fazle Hossain Badsha in Raishahi Hossain and Justice Farid Ahmed City Corporation polls. issued a rule asking the government of Workers Party of Bangladesh, told to explain why some provisions of The Daily Star that JP chief HM the Contempt of Court Ordinance Ershad and his party are not deemed 2008 including the ones that allow to be pro-democratic and secular. complaining about a judge and criticising judgments should not be the grand electoral alliance ahead of adjudged ultravires (without authorthe stalled ninth parliamentary polls

ity) of the constitution and void. Then on July 6, during hearing on a contempt rule against 18 journalists of the weekly Shirsho Kagoj, the

BDR, BSF

Brig Gen Bari said he handed over to the BSF a list of 1,497 Bangladeshi miscreants operating from India and a list of 1,761 Indian smugglers,

criminals, robbers and rustlers. He said he also handed in a list containing the details of five anti-Bangladesh organisations active in

mounting pressure on the govern-He, however, stopped short of ment for lifting the emergency and saying if detained Ulfa leader Anup holding the parliamentary polls Chetia would be handed over to before the upazila polls, said the India.

"It was discussed during the ministry-level talks between the

two countries in Delhi," he said. BSF IG Murlidhar said he

handed over a list of 482 Bangladeshi smugglers, rustlers, human traffickers and another list of 200 Bangladeshi criminals involved in trafficking women and not take part in the polls, it would

children into India. They described the deaths of that would be really difficult for the two BDR soldiers on July 17 and one Indian border guard on Wednesday as "isolated" incidents, with Murlidhar saying that BSF had ordered a probe into the July 17 incident.

CHAPAINAWABGANJ

Tension still

runs high in

frontier village

A CORRESPONDENT, Cnawabganj

Tension still runs high at Pirojpur

village in Chapainawabganj after

Indian Border Security Force (BSF)

exchanged gunfire on Wednesday

ing their days anxiously fearing

further clashes between the two

39 Rifles Battalion in

Chapainawabganj Maj Syed Abu

the border is quite normal and no

untoward incident has occurred

Sonamasjid land port resumed

Export and import through the

Deputy Manager of

Sonamasjid-Panama Port Link Ltd

Belal Hossain said export and

import activities through the port

City, municipal polls

conducted and check posts at

different strategic points would be

installed to ensure security before

elections have more importance as

it is the first election run by this

caretaker government. We would

ensure security so that people can

reach the polling centres, cast their

polling centres in four city corpora-

tions and nine municipalities, they

identified 434 as vulnerable to

centres of 587 in the four city cor-

porations are vulnerable to vio-

lence and 65 polling centres of 141

in nine municipalities are vulnera-

According to him, 369 polling

The IGP also said of the total 728

The IGP said, "The upcoming

were normal yesterday.

and during the elections.

votes and return safely."

violence.

ble to violence.

Local people said they are pass-

However, Operation Officer of

morning.

vesterday.

FROM PAGE 16

SPOUSES OF 8 RHD OFFICIALS TO BE ASKED TO REVEAL WEALTH

& Highways Department (RHD) officials asking them to submit wealth statements to the commis-The anti-graft watchdog, mean-

nod to two final reports.

vesterday.

Another two officials, including

The ACC approved two final reports exonerating Court Sub-Inspector Ali Hossain from misappropriation of liquor and Solaiman Ghani, a union parishad chairman in Lalmonirhat, from misappropria-

In reply to a query, the IGP said they identified the polling centres as vulnerable to violence by analysing the history of the centres and considering the geographic location of the polling centres.

The IGP earlier had a meeting with senior police officials to discuss security measures to be taken on the eve of the city corporation and municipality polls.

within a week why the contempt of On August 4, elections would be court ordinance should not be ruled held in Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet city corporations and Yesterday the HC heard both the Manikganj municipality of rules before passing the verdict. Manikganj, Sripur municipality of Earlier, it appointed seven legal Gazipur, Phulbaria municipality of experts as amicus curiae (friend of Mymensingh, Shariatpur municithe court) for legal interpretations in pality of Shariatpur, Sitakunda the case. They are Mahmudul Islam, municipality of Chittagong, Amir-Ul Islam, Rafique-ul Huq, Naohata municipality of Rajshahi, Ajmalul Hossain, AHM Shamsuddin Dupchanchia municipality of Chowdhury Manik, Abdul Wadud Bogra, Chuadanga municipality of Chuadanga and Golapganj munic-Abdur Razzak assisted by Belayet ipality of Sylhet. Hossain and Emran Siddique

Saarc accord

FROM PAGE 16

crime," Information and Broadcasting Minister PR Dasmunsi told reporters here. The Cabinet also gave its nod for

signing an agreement for setting up the South Asia Regional Standards Organisation (SARSO) during the Summit. The proposal, mooted by India,

is expected to enhance the level of economic engagement with the Saarc countries by envisaging regional cooperation on standards and quality control The pact will also promote

trade, besides development of quality infrastructure to the entire region, he said.

Food import

FROM PAGE 1

chit, saying that under the clause 85 of the PPR 2008 the ministry could import food to meet emergencies without going through tender pro-

The committee also decided to rethink the resumption of operation of Chittagong Chemical Mills Ltd, North Bengal Paper Mills Ltd and Khulna Newsprint Mills after getting back the three industrial units from the Privatisation Commission. MARKETMONITORING

The army-led joint forces, Rab, BDR, police and civil administration will keep watch on markets during Ramadan, so that the traders cannot make large profits by charging high prices for goods. The decision was taken in a meet-

visit to Finland and the UK has ing of an inter-ministerial monitor-At the meetings leaders of the AL ing committee at the commerce and JP opted for leaving their options ministry yesterday. Chaired by Additional Secretary open and being prepared to take part in the upazila polls whenever neces-

of the ministry Golam Mostakim, the meeting reviewed the import, supply, stock and overall price situation of essentials.

The meeting urged TCB, BDR and Food Department to take all-out steps so that the supply of essentials is not disrupted during Ramadan. It asked the state-run TCB (Trad-

ing Corporation of Bangladesh) to complete the import of 3000 tonnes of pulses, 3000 tonnes of edible oil and 500 tonnes of onion before Ramadan. The meeting decided to make a

request to the Fisheries and Livestock Department and the Cooperatives Department to go on selling fish and enhance the production and supply of Milk Vita products during the holy month.

It also requested the Agriculture Marketing and Department of

4-lane Dhaka-Ctg

FROM PAGE 1 Board of Revenue (NBR).

Amid a chaotic political situation, a tender for making the 190kilometre highway (Daudkandi-Chittagong) was floated first in September 2006 after a lengthy discussion during the tenure of BNP-led coalition government.

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and The present caretaker government scrapped it in April 2007 for reasons still unknown. Sensing the urgency of a wider highway, they floated a fresh tender in March this year only to cancel it on July 7 on grounds of the PPR 'violation'

The communications secretary however skirted a question whether he would take any actions against RHD and the PD for the Hasan claimed that the situation at

Sources in communications and RHD say the then chief engineer Ashraful Islam formally asked the ministry on March 10 to issue an invitation for tender to the prequalified bidders as there was no objection about the tender by any

The tender has earlier been evaluated by the tender evaluation committee. None of the 10 prequalified bidders raised any comor before closing of the bid.

"There were also opinions of the communications ministry as well as the law ministry and NBR incorporated in the tender documents," said an official, who was involved in the project.

On June 23, Communications Ministry Deputy Secretary Abul Khayer wrote to the Central Procurement and Technical Committee (CPTU) asking them for specific comments on time span of submission of performance guarantee.

In its reply on July 6, CPTU said changes and modifications can be made if it is not inconsistent with

the related acts and regulations The ministry cancelled the whole tender process the next day with out referring to the CPTU com-

Director General of CPTU Amullya Kanti Devnath told The Daily Star they did not give any specific opinions on the issue and left the matter to the ministry.

In an abrupt move, the deputy secretary issued a letter cancelling the tender and faxed it to the chief engineer in the afternoon on July 7. The hasty move raises questions about the ministry's intension and transparency in the process.

Referring to the Public Procurement Act, 2006 and the Public Procurement Regulation 2008, the then PD wrote to the chief engineer on July 10 saying the cabinet committee on government purchase is the lone authority to take decision on the recommendations of the evaluation committee in a development project. The PD, who was transferred on

July 10, also urged the ministry to review the decision considering importance of the project, its immediate implementation and the skyrocketing cost of construction plaints in the pre-bidding meeting materials. He said all the bidders quoted less than that of the government's estimated budget for the

Development of the highway might be delayed by years as some of the pre-qualified bidders on Sunday filed writs with the High Court challenging the ministry's authority to cancel the bid.

The country's busiest highway linking the port city and the capital has become a death trap due to its narrowness and the rise in vehicles over the years.

Officials emphasised immediate expansion of the road under the project to be implemented with the Japan debt cancellation fund.

RPO won't be repealed

FROM PAGE 1

caretaker government for approving the new ordinance.

Amid such a situation, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at a meeting with the EC yesterday morning disclosed the government's plan to bring necessary amendments to the RPO 1972, sources said.

"Since everyone wants amendment to the existing RPO instead of promulgation of a new one, we do not have any objection to it," Election Commissioner Muhammed Sohul Hussain, who met the chief adviser along with chief election commissioner, told reporters at his office.

The proposals drafted by the EC would be incorporated in the form of amendment, he said.

A huge task has to be done afresh to amend the RPO 1972. All the electoral reform pro-

posals along with the election rules and political parties' registration rules will have to be drafted in English since the RPO 2008 was drafted in Bangla.

Sohul Hussain, however, said the EC expects to complete the task of bringing amendment to the RPO 1972 within the next 10

The law ministry has already started working and the EC officials will help it, if necessary, Sohul said, adding that the chief adviser assured the commission of completing the task as soon as tions.

While the RPO 1972 is being amended, the EC will begin the process for registering the political parties to ensure their financial transparency and practice of internal democracy.

The current EC, which was reconstituted on February 4 last year, disclosed the draft proposals for electoral reforms on April 5 last year and announced to finalise the draft in consultation with the political parties. But it could not hold talks

with the political parties since the caretaker government did not allow indoor politics until September 10 last year. After the government allowed indoor politics in the capital, the EC began holding talks with the parties from September 12. It wrapped up the talks after

holding the second round of dialogue this February and sent the draft proposals to the government in May to make them At the talks with the EC, major

political parties opposed its move to repeal the existing RPO to clear the way for promulgating a new one and suggested amending the existing RPO.

At the meeting with the chief adviser at his office yesterday, the EC also informed him of its preparations for holding the upazila and parliamentary elec-

Indigenous people

FROM PAGE 16 the forestland.

According to records, the government has established a firing range on 1,000 acres of land, proposed rubber plants on 10,872 acres and social forestry on 7,323 acres. On the other hand, 8,630 families live on 13,718 acres of land. Less than one-third has survived as the torest.

Ajay A Mri in his keynote paper said the Garo communities of Modhupur still hope the government would take measures to save the natural forests. He urged all to settle the land dispute issues with the indigenous people living in the villages of Modhupur.

Raja Devasish Roy said it is not possible to save forestland by filing cases against forest dwellers. The records say the more cases were filed the more the forest was destroyed, he added.

"So the Department of Forest has to bring in a total change in their attitude," said Raja Devasish Roy. Pramod Mankin, a former

lawmaker belonging to indigenous community, said the government always intends to conduct their development work on the land of the indigenous peo-"Now we, the indigenous

research but we find no change in our fate," he said.

people, have become a subject to

We have to save the forest and at the same time ensure the rights of the forest dwellers," he said.

Prof Sadeka Halim presented a paper on "Rights of Forest Dwellers". She said forestry in Bangladesh has been witnessing continuation of British and Pakistani policy, which was commercial in nature, state-centric and devoid of people's participa-

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director (programme) of BELA, proposed to engage local forest dwellers in management of forest under certain conditions fixing out their responsibilities to maintain the forest.

She also requested the government to take proper measures to save the wildlife and proper demarcation of forestland. "The government seems more

interested in planting alien verities in the forest under social forestry project, which is also a participatory method. But they don't take initiatives to manage the natural forest under joint management system.

Nepal has regained its natural forest implementing community forestry, Syeda Rizwana said, adding, the village forest model will be same as the community forestry. Sanjeev Drong, Dr Ronald rats lose their habitats when bam-Halder, Suvash Jeng Cham, Dr M

Parvez Rahim, Fariduddin Ahemd, Yakub Ali also spoke at from different forest dwellers community, mainly Garo, Khasia,

Court raps cops

FROM PAGE 16

of different police stations, who had been asked to return reports on arrest warrants to the court by yesterday, did not comply with the court

The court also said the police submitted the charge sheet of the case after four years of the grenade attacks and have been trying to delay

Only Barisal Kotwali police submitted a report on the arrest warrant against Abu Bakar alias Hafez Selim mentioning that they could not arrest him.

Meantime, the same court rejected the bail petitions of detained former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pintu and three Huji members, Ari Hasan Sumon, Jahangir Alam and Shahadat Ullah Jewel.

and Sumon submitted petitions for retraction of their confessional statements saying that they were forced to give the statements. The court fixed August 10 for next hearing of the case and directed the

Huji Chief Mufti Abdul Hannan

OC of different police stations to submit reports on arrest warrants against the seven absconding accused on the scheduled date. The prosecution told the judge that they would try to make sure that

police submit the reports in due Moving the bail petitions, the lawyers told the court that their clients were implicated in the case as

part of a conspiracy to harass them. The prosecution said the petitions should be rejected as they had earlier confessed to their involvement in the incident.

The case was filed for carrying out grenade attacks on an Awami League (AL) rally on August 21, 2004 that left 23 people dead and around 200

Detained former lawmaker Pintu and other accused, who are in jail custody now, were produced before the court.

The seven absconding accused are Pintu's brothers Maulana Tajuddin and Maulana Liton, Anisul Mursalin and his brother Mahibul Muttakin, Iqbal, Jahangir Alam Badar and Khalilur Rahman

Zafarullah

FROM PAGE 1

year asking him to submit his wealth statement to it. Meanwhile, another special court

dealing with the Gatco corruption case against detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and 23 others set August 5 for submitting the certified copy of the High Court (HC) stay order. Judge Shahed Noor Uddin of

Special Court-3, set up on the Jatiya

Sangsad Bhaban premises, fixed the new date as both the prosecution and defence lawyers failed to submit the papers to the court yesterday. On July 20, the court set yesterday for submitting it but both the sides told the court that they were yet to get the certified copy of the HC stay

submitting the papers after hearing both the sides. Former premier Khaleda Zia was not produced before the court yes-

order. The judge fixed August 5 for

terday However, other accused including former agriculture minister MK Anwar and former industries minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, who were released on bail by the HC, were present at the court.

The ACC filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against 24 people including Khaleda and her son Koko on September 2 last year on charges of corruption in awarding Gatco a contract for container handling at depots in Dhaka and Chittagong.

Hill people

FROM PAGE 16

Following bamboo blossoming last year rats invaded many CHT areas and destroyed almost everything edible. This forced many indige nous people to leave their villages.

Talking to the people from Ruma Thanchi, Sungsangpara, Anandapara, Wykangpara, it was learnt that rats ate all their rice, ginger, maize, turmeric, peppers pumpkins, oil seeds and cotton.

The government provided each family with 15kg rice while the UNDP and World Food Programme provided 30kg rice per family in the affected areas, the locals said. But the aid exhausted within

two months or just one month in the case of a bigger family, they Mostly Bowm, Marma, Tripura and Murong communities live in these remote villages. These people

generally grow everything they

need and just have to buy kerosene

and salt from the market. Thiam Khub now works in the jhum and weaves. He said he can weave a "thurang" in two days and | Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, sell it for Tk 100 at Ruma Bazar, about eight hours' walk from his village. But with this amount he can

hardly buy 3kgs of rice. "I am having a very hard time because if I weave thurang, I cannot work on jhum, "he said.

"We have already sold most of the cattle in our village to buy rice. Many of us now have nothing to sell and are living on wild potatoes, arum or other wild roots," said Chandiram Tripura of Anandapara. About the relation between rat infestation and bamboo blooming,

boo plants die after blooming. "So, the rats come out of the bamboo bushes and attack crops," he said.

Zia Orphanage

arrested him and handed him over to

the police." "During interrogation, he admitted his involvement in the scam," Rashid said, adding, "We already got the information required and if necessary we would later seek him to

be placed on remand." Rashid said Tk 2.10 crore was withdrawn from his account in March last year.

According to sources,

Ramna police said the ACC team handed Sharifuddin Ahmed over to them around 5:30pm.

Sharifuddin Ahmed, a resident of Moghbazar, Dhaka, is a businessman close to former BNP lawmaker Kazi Salimul Haque, now on the run. ACC sources said among the four other accused in the case former MP

Kazi Salimul Haque, Syed Ahmed

USA while Khaleda's nephew

Mominur Rahman could not be

and Gias Uddin Ahmed are in the

According to the case, the accused embezzled Tk 2.10 crore by establishing Zia Orphanage Trust which only existed on paper.

The complainant alleged that on June 9 in 1991, a grant of the amount of \$1,255,000, equivalent to about Tk 4,45 crore at the time, was transferred from United Saudi Commercial Bank to Prime Minister's Orphanage Fund--a fund that was created by then premier Khaleda shortly before the transfer of the grant as part of the embezzlement scheme. Only Khaleda administered the fund.

so-called Zia Orphanage Trust on the pretext of building an orphanage in On November 15 the same year, the cheque was deposited into Zia

On September 5, 1993, Khaleda,

still the prime minister, issued a Tk

2.33-crore cheque from the Prime

Minister's Orphanage Fund to the

Orphanage Trust account maintained with Sonali Bank's New North Circle Branch at Gulshan in the

capital. Later, Tk 4 lakh was withdrawn from the trust account and Tk 2.77lakh of it was spent to purchase 2.79, acres of land at Gabtoli in Bogra-

under the name of Zia Orphanage In the following 13 years, between 1993 and April 2006, there was no activity of the trust and the amount saved in the account of the trust grew-

to Tk 3.37 crore with accrued interest. In April, June and July of 2006, Khaleda's son Tarique Rahman, also the chairman of the Zia Orphanage! Trust, transferred Tk 3.3 crore fromthe trust account in six cheques to an, FDR (fixed deposit receipt) account opened by his relative Mominur Rahman with Gulshan branch of

Prime Bank. By February 7, 2007, most of the Tk 3.3 crore was again distributed into new FDR accounts opened with-Prime Bank's New Eskaton branch at' Ramna under the names of Kazi-Salimul Haque, Syed Ahmed, Gias Uddin Ahmed and Sharifuddin

Finally, on February 15, 2007, Tk 2.10 crore was embezzled by withdrawing it through pay orders from two of the FDR accounts, the case statement said.

DCC stops

FROM PAGE 16 order to improve drainage system in the areas, adding that they would

nowlook for alternative ways. "If we fail to find any alternatives, then we'll conduct a technical feasibility study and seek advice from environmentalists before taking any decision on cutting

Price of super palm oil was

A 5-litre container of

Rupchanda brand soybean oil was

selling at Tk 610 to Tk 615 while that

of Pusti brand was selling at Tk 600.

Rupchanda's 900-ml can was

blamed a number of wholesalers in

the same market for the high prices

Retailers at Karnaphuli market

Mirersarai Traders was selling

selling for Tk 122.

between Tk 105 and Tk 106 a kg.

down the trees," he said.

Edible oil

FROM PAGE 16 palm oil was selling for Tk 3,600 while the price was Tk 3,900 a week

In the same market, palm oil was selling at Tk 3,450 per maund against the price of Tk 3,750 last week. Price range of soybean oil was between Tk 4,050 and Tk 4,100 as opposed to Tk 4,250 on Monday.

A wholesale trader said reduced crude oil prices helped lower the prices of edible oil on the international market and as a result, the wholesale prices of edible oil in the country also came down. Shahed Chowdhury, another super palm oil at Tk 3,830 per

wholesaler who has a huge stock of

rates, feared incurring a huge loss due to the reduced prices. However, he said the wholesalers have to accept the fact and sell their old stock at lower rates to

stay in the highly competitive business. The Daily Star correspondent while collecting retail price information from different retail outlets in the city yesterday did not notice any impact of falling prices on the

Most retailers were selling

soybean oil for Tk 118 to Tk 120 per

kilogram (kg) although the govern-

ment in a meeting on July 9 fixed

wholesale price of the item at Tk

for comment yesterday.

of super palm oil was purchased two days back at Tk 3,790 a maund fixed at Tk 3,830.

said pilots confirmed they had hit

for a homeland for minority Tamils

in Colombo starting July 26. The government has brushed off the

summit starting August 2. "The heads of state will have their own security personnel to provide close protection," said Mediwaka, who is responsible for

He said key roads in the city will be closed for normal traffic during the summit that will be attended by leaders of Afghanistan, Force (Isaf) said. Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri

security for its Prime Minister travel within Sri Lanka in Indian military helicopters and bulletproof cars.

New Delhi is sending war ships to anchor off Sri Lanka's coast to overnight, another police official evacuate its delegates in case of any closure of the island's only international airport, diplomats here said.

wildlife expert Dr Reza Khan said Colombo. The Tamil Tigers, however, have

as the wholesalers are still selling the oils at higher rates despite the recent fall in prices.

maund yesterday while Hanif Store edible oil purchased at higher and Fayez Traders were selling soybean oil for Tk 4,200 a maund. Palm oil price at Hanif Store was set atTk 3,600.

None of the owners of these wholesale stores could be reached Jafar Ahmad, staff member of

and their selling price has been Most retailers in the meantime were found cheating their unsuspecting customers by selling them the low-priced super palm oil

instead of the higher-priced soya

12,000 additional police

bean oil.

wholesale market.

Separatist Tamil Tigers, fighting

since 1972, had no comment on casualties. The LTTE on Tuesday offered a unilateral 10-day ceasefire ahead of a meeting of South Asian leaders

Earlier Lankan police deputy Inspector General Nimal Mediwaka said the 12,000 men will reinforce soldiers, who will also deploy in strength ahead of the two-day South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc)

security in the already tightlyguarded capital of 650,000 people.

Lanka. in thousands of troops as part of

Sri Lankan authorities have in the past shut the airport and the island's air space when Tamil Tiger rebels used light aircraft to carry out bombing missions over

announced a unilateral truce for the duration of the summit. Afghanistan and Pakistan are

Mirersarai Traders, said their stock

also set to bring considerable

security contingents to protect their leaders, officials here said. The 15th summit of Saarc should have been hosted by the Maldives, but the atoll nation agreed to allow Colombo to stage the event to coincide with the

pendence from Britain.

FROM PAGE 16

"At least 15 Taliban have been killed and several others are wounded since yesterday (Wednesday),' provincial government spokesman Ismail Jahangir said. Dozens of Taliban militants had

"Joint operations began -- with a coordinated air strike on insurgents -- inside the village of Ajristan. Several insurgents have been killed and wounded." Nato's International Security Assistance

In other violence, a remotecontrolled bomb destroyed a police vehicle in the eastern prov-India is reported to be bringing ince of Paktia early Thursday, killing four policemen and wounding two others, said deputy provin-Manmohan Singh, who will also cial police chief Ghulam Dastageer

Taliban fighters also ambushed

a police vehicle on patrol in the

southwestern province of Farah "Three police were killed and another three were wounded," said

The hardline Islamic Taliban were in government between 1996 and 2001 when they were driven out in a US-led invasion.

which has gained pace in the past two years, claiming hundreds of lives including scores of civilians.

man for western Afghanistan.

island's 60th anniversary of inde-

57 Taliban killed

captured the district, located 200km southwest of Kabul, on Monday, killing one police officer as they stormed in.

Abdul Raof Ahmadi, police spokes-

They are waging an insurgency.

leaders of the party are in favour of Agriculture Extension to boost pro-Dr Atiq Rahman said saving the workshop. Representatives participating in the local body As bamboo generally blooms in duction of cucumber, brinjal and forests by violating the rights of polls, given that the emergency is 20-40 years, he suggested cleaning green chilli for meeting its increased lifted before holding the polls. the people is no more a developthe bamboo bushes accordingly so demand during the month. ment concept. Koch communities, were present. | that bamboo cannot bloom.